

MEETING MINUTES
Finance Committee
Wednesday, December 1, 2010

CALL TO ORDER

Time – 7:05 P.M.

Members in attendance: Chairman Joanne F. Marden, Mary O'Donoghue, S. Jon Stumpf, Cindy Milne, Richard T. Howe, Mark Merritt, Paul Fortier, and Peggy Kruse.

Also present: Finance Director Anthony Torrisi and Town Manager Reginald S. Stapczynski.

MEETING MINUTES

The minutes of November 10, 2010 were moved and seconded for approval. The motion passed unanimously with corrections, 8-0.

LIAISON REPORTS

Mr. Stumpf reported meeting with the new School Business Manager Peter DeRoeve. The meeting went well with a willingness to share information and with more open communication than in the past regarding the comparison of budget numbers. SPED Out of District and Salaries and Benefits numbers were good. Concern was voiced over high numbers for Out of District and In District Transportation as well as Evaluation and Therapy budgets. Mr. DeRoeve assured Mr. Stumpf he would investigate those numbers further and follow up. Chairman Marden asked for volunteers for Finance Committee liaisons to be seated on a joint subcommittee to meet with State legislators consisting of Board of Selectmen, Finance Committee and School Committee members. Mr. Stumpf and Mr. Howe were designated as liaisons.

Audit Committee

Mark Merritt reported the next Audit Committee Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 15th.

Town Yard Task Force

Peggy Kruse reported there was a possible co-buyer for the Brockway-Smith property. Additionally, that putting out a new RFP was being considered.

Chairman Marden reported the Board of Selectmen voted to set the tax rate and new values for properties would be put online after they are certified.

Ms. Marden thanked Carolyn Lynch, Finance & Budget secretary, for her help with preparing the December 6, 2010 Special Town Meeting Finance Committee Report.

DECEMBER 6TH SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

Bancroft School Project

Chairman Marden distributed a draft copy of a letter she authored titled "Finance Committee Report Update, Special Town Meeting, December 6, 2010" for committee review. Subsequent to some editing, committee members approved of and agreed to post this letter to the

Town's website with an attached schedule titled "Debt Service Cost Estimate for Bancroft School".

Special Town Meeting Speaker Assignments

Mary O'Donoghue – Bancroft School Project (Article 3)

Paul Fortier – Purchase of 3 Blanchard Street (Article 1)

Peggy Kruse – Conservation Land Grant Approval (Article 2)

DISCUSSION ON CIP

Ms. Marden asked the committee for concerns they may want to bring before the Joint Board at their meeting on Monday, December 13th. Committee members said they assumed that additional information on projections would be provided. Additionally, that they would like to see more detail with regard to bottom line expenses. It was noted that unknown revenue and expense factors such as Local Aid and School stimulus spending add to the difficulty of projecting out costs. Mr. Stapczynski reported an increase in permit activity from the CD&P Building Division.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding the transfer of money from one reserve fund to another specifically the OPEB and Water/Sewer Enterprise Funds. Committee members asked how the Town could build up reserve funds while not currently being included in the projections forecast. Mr. Stapczynski noted communities nationwide were dealing with this problem and that the option of offering state loans to fund trust funds was currently being considered.

Mr. Merritt voiced disappointment with the current CIP spending plan for reasons that it should be a more structured, prioritized five year plan that is tied to the Revenue budget. Mr. Merritt suggested that Department Heads submit actual five year plans that must be strictly followed. Lengthy discussion followed. Mr. Stapczynski agreed this suggestion made sense for borrowing, but disagreed for projecting out costs for out-years citing too many unknown variables within department operations.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Stapczynski reported the Town is reviewing resumes for 90 applicants for the new CIO position. The Town Manager and School Superintendent will interview the finalists and make a final decision by January or early February.

NEXT MEETING

Finance Committee

Wednesday, January 19, 2010

2nd Floor Conference Room

7:00 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT – 9:05 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,
Carolyn Lynch
Recording Secretary